

How safe is the vaccine?

Vaccine safety

All three COVID-19 vaccines are held to the same standards as other vaccines available in the U.S. The Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are both mRNA vaccines. mRNA technology has been studied for many years. All chemicals in the vaccines are known and safe. The Janssen COVID-19 vaccine is a viral vector vaccine. The viral vector technology is used in the Ebola vaccine. You can't get COVID-19 from any of the vaccines.

Side effects

In the clinical trials there were no significant concerns; this remains the case with Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna. However for the Janssen vaccine, in rare cases since then, women between ages 18 and 49 years had a very rare but serious event involving blood clots with low levels of platelets (blood cells that help your body stop bleeding) following vaccination. CDC determined that the vaccine's known and potential benefits are much greater than the known or potential risks.

Janssen COVID-19 vaccine

The most common side effects of the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine are pain, redness of skin, and/or swelling at the injection site, fatigue, fever, muscle pain, headache, and nausea. Symptoms typically last several days. If you received the Janssen vaccine, contact your healthcare provider and seek medical treatment immediately if you develop any of the following symptoms: severe headache; new or worsening backache; new neurologic symptoms such as trouble speaking, visual changes, weakness of arm or leg, seizures; severe abdominal pain; shortness of breath; leg swelling; tiny red spots on the skin (petechiae); or new bruising or easy bruising that is not normal for you.

Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines

Side effects of mRNA vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines) – such as fever, chills, muscle aches, joint pain, headaches and pain at the injection site – can mirror symptoms of a mild case of the flu and last up to several days.

What to expect after vaccination

CDC is constantly updating its guidance, and you can find more information at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html>

More information about the vaccine

Scan the code to visit the web pages

VA COVID-19 vaccination

<https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>



CDC Coronavirus Vaccine

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>



FDA Emergency Use Authorization

<https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-legal-regulatory-and-policy-framework/emergency-use-authorization>



VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans from Communities at High Risk of COVID-19:

What you need to know about getting the COVID-19 vaccine

"VA is providing free COVID-19 vaccine for Veterans and employees. I was so relieved when I received my vaccination. I look forward to everyone getting vaccinated so we can safely resume the activities we love to do."



Kameron Leigh Matthews, MD, JD, FAAFP
Chief Medical Officer
Veterans Health Administration

VA's goal is to provide vaccine for all Veterans and employees who want to be vaccinated in 2021.

Who is eligible for vaccination at VA?

On March 24, 2021, President Biden signed the SAVE LIVES Act, expanding eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination at VA to include:

All Veterans

- This includes anyone who served in the U.S. military including the National Guard, Reserves or Coast Guard
- Commissioned officers of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or the U.S. Public Health Service
- Cadets or midshipmen of the U.S. military academies

Spouses of Veterans

- Spouses include those in same-sex and common law marriages; widows or widowers of Veterans; individuals who characterize their relationship as spousal can receive the vaccine.

Caregivers of Veterans

- A family member or friend who provides care to a Veteran. This includes helping the Veteran with personal needs like feeding, bathing, dressing or tasks like transportation and shopping.

CHAMPVA Recipients

- Spouses or children of permanently and totally disabled Veterans or of Veterans who have died from service-connected disabilities.

Get your vaccine at the first opportunity

Your employer, pharmacy, health care provider or local public health department may offer you a COVID-19 vaccine. Our goal is for you to be more protected from COVID-19 and we encourage you to take the first opportunity to get a vaccine.

Where can I get the COVID-19 vaccine?

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized the use of three vaccines to protect against COVID-19: the Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 vaccines.

VA is offering these vaccines at facilities nationwide.

VA facilities

Veterans, spouses, caregivers, CHAMPVA recipients:

- Visit www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/
- Learn about getting a vaccine at VA
- Sign up to tell us you'd like to get a vaccine at VA.
- Your local facility will contact you by phone, email or text to schedule your vaccination.
- Your facility may also invite you to a large vaccination event, like a drive-thru clinic.



Community Care Network

Community care eligible Veterans can identify in-network urgent care facilities and retail pharmacies by using VA's facility locator at <https://www.va.gov/find-locations>. Veterans are encouraged to call the community care provider of choice to ensure the site has available vaccines and appointments. Veterans are encouraged to download the pharmacy information card at <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/docs/programs/Pharmacy-Billing-Flyer.pdf> and present it at the community care location where the vaccine is being administered.



Why should I get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it is available to me?

- **You can protect yourself from COVID-19 illness and death.**
- **A vaccine could help slow the spread of COVID-19 in hard hit communities.** According to the CDC, racial and ethnic minority groups represent 40% of the total U.S. population yet comprise nearly 60% of COVID-19 cases and 50% of COVID-19 deaths.
- **The scientific review process was thorough.** Scientists reviewed data from vaccine trials that involved tens of thousands of people.
- **In clinical trials, vaccines were effective across age, gender, racial and ethnic backgrounds.**
- **Side effects of vaccine were consistent across age, gender, racial and ethnic backgrounds, in clinical trials.**
- **Do your part.** Widespread vaccination is the best way to get us back to doing the things most important to us.

